

PROTECT-INSPECTION

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Mr Stephen Potter
Lambeth Academy
Elms Road
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Dear Mr Potter

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Lambeth Academy

Thank you for your cooperation and the welcome extended to me and the additional inspector during our inspection of your academy on 5 May 2011. I am grateful for the time you gave to our preparatory telephone discussions and for the information that you provided before and during the inspection. Please convey my thanks to your staff and students for their welcome, and their contributions.

As a result of the inspection on 17 March 2010, the academy was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter. There have been no significant contextual changes since that inspection.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the academy has made:

satisfactory progress in making improvements, and

good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Students' attainment has begun to improve rapidly since the previous inspection. Year 11 have already achieved higher proportions of passes at grade C and above in GCSE English and mathematics, as a result of early entries, than were achieved by the previous cohort at the end of their examination courses. This better progress is a result of a rigorous analysis of all students' achievements. The academy has used this information to implement plans that have enabled students to secure important threshold levels of attainment in key subjects. Attainment by the end of Year 9 has also risen, to now be in line with the national average.

Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are continuing to make better progress, as a consequence of well-structured and appropriately-pitched support by teachers and support assistants. Levels of literacy on arrival to the



academy are low, but show improvement over Key Stage 3 as a result of well-targeted and effective intervention, particularly in English. The academy-wide literacy strategy complementing this work is beginning to contribute to improvements.

Students are being supported to be more confident and independent learners through a wide range of strategies. In many lessons, students are thinking more for themselves, and evaluating and questioning their learning; group and paired work is sometimes used well to support this. However, some teachers are still not prioritising obtaining frequent feedback about learning and responding to it. The development of thinking and learning skills is having positive impact but is not delivered consistently across the whole academy. The benefit is most apparent at Key Stage 3 where definitions of levels of achievement, in each of the personal learning and thinking skills, have been developed. Students receive good support in tutor time to encourage them to reflect on their grades and develop learning skills.

The academy is making good progress in improving behaviour. Although breaks and lunchtimes are noisy and busy, students are more relaxed with each other now. Several students identified the mixed-age tutor groups as a reason why the academy felt like a 'nicer place' this year, and one said that they had 'got to know and like each other more this year' as a result. Behaviour in lessons is better but is still strongly dependent on the quality of teaching. Systems of rewards and sanctions are now used more consistently, and teachers work with more common purpose. However, a minority of lessons are still adversely affected by poor behaviour when the point of a learning activity is not clear to students.

The academy's specialisms of languages and business and enterprise education are growing in significance. However these subject areas are still at the stage of becoming stronger in their own right by developing more appropriate curriculum models and improving the quality of teaching. Students understand the significance of the specialisms in the work of the academy, but neither is yet in the position to lead learning or drive initiatives in other areas of the academy.

The academy has strongly developed its capacity to sustain improvement since the previous inspection. There is more rigorous monitoring and clearer accountability for outcomes at all levels. Information about students' achievement is used much better to hold middle leaders to account and to evaluate the impact of agreed strategies. Judgements of students' attainment are more secure because they are based on better evidence than last year. The development plan now associates actions with desired outcomes much more clearly, enabling better monitoring of progress towards targets. The academy uses the support and advice of its sponsors, United Learning Trust, its school improvement partner and various consultants well.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your academy. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alan Taylor-Bennett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2010

- Develop the specialist subjects of modern foreign language and business and enterprise so that they make a positive contribution to students' learning and progress by:
 - ensuring that opportunities to promote these subjects across the curriculum are given a higher profile in teachers' planning and during lessons
 - making certain that students are aware of how these subjects contribute positively to their learning.

- Enhance the focus on supporting students in acquiring the skills they need to become proficient, independent learners by:
 - including objectives for the development of personal learning skills in every lesson
 - consistently reviewing students' perceptions and reinforcing the positive features of their personal learning skills during tutor times and towards the end of each lesson.

- Eliminate the instances of poor behaviour that occasionally inhibit the learning and progress of some students by:
 - reviewing and embedding the strategies that are already in place to improve behaviour
 - ensuring that all teachers become proficient in applying the strategies consistently.